



Connecticut Association of the Deaf

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Public testimony regarding Appropriations for the National Theatre of the Deaf

February 15, 2012

Senator Toni Harp and Representative Toni Walker, Co-Chairs:

My name is Sandra Inzinga, and I am currently Vice President of the Connecticut Association of the Deaf. Thank you for allowing me time to talk to you about the National Theatre of the Deaf.

As a Deaf person, I have always felt fortunate to live in CT, where there were many home of the first school for the deaf, the first commission on the deaf, and the first theatre for the deaf.

Connecticut is the birthplace of the National Theatre of the Deaf (NTD) where actors sign in American Sign Language (ASL). At the same-time there is always someone voicing the action and dialogue so that, "you see and hear every word." This allows both Deaf and Hearing audiences to share the enjoyment of this unique type of theatre that is not available anywhere else in the state of Connecticut. It allows families in which have both hearing and deaf members to share an art form, that otherwise would alienate one group or the other.

This style of acting has since been replicated and imbedded into numerous companies throughout the world who respectfully credit Connecticut's National Theatre of the Deaf as their mentor and creator of theatrical art form that meets the needs of *everyone* in attendance.

We have shared our Deaf pride, in the accomplishments of a number of actors who were affiliated with the National Theatre for the Deaf, such as performer, writer, director, poet, and artist, Bernard Bragg, Tony Award-winning actress Phyllis Frelich, Oscar Award-winning actress Marlee Matlin, Emmy Award-winning producer Juliana Field, former NTD Executive Director and actor Aaron Kubey, Broadway actor and playwright, Garrett Zuercher, and Movie Actors Linda Bove, and Ed Waterstreet.

On behalf of the Connecticut Association of the Deaf I ask that you reconsider The proposal to eliminate the appropriations for the National Theatre of the Deaf, and to recognize the importance of the role that this unique theatre plays in the cultural, history and pride of the Connecticut Deaf community.

Thank you.